

AUDIO TOUR TRANSCRIPTS

MAINE WILDLIFE PARK

2011

GREETINGS

Welcome to the Maine Wildlife Park Audio tour. This tour is one tool you can use to learn more about the park and its wildlife. The audio tour is free, but you will be charged cell phone minutes based on the plan you have with your service provider. Throughout the park there are small blue signs posted indicating a cell phone audio stop. You can visit these stops in sequence or at random by simply dialing this same telephone number and entering the stop number listed on the sign. You can also reference the park map to identify these audio stops.

The Wildlife Park is owned and operated by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, charged with protecting, preserving and enhancing Maine's fish and wildlife; and their habitats. The park is here for you to learn more about Maine's native wildlife, and the work the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife does to maintain healthy wildlife populations throughout the state.

If needed, strollers and wheelchairs are available at the admissions gate for a small rental fee.

As you enter through the Gate, please note the large wooden sign on your right announcing upcoming events here at the park. You can also take a complete list of this season's events home with you – they are on the back side of the park map.

Although the park is owned and operated by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, the facility relies extensively on a large corps of volunteers who provide much of the labor to keep us in operation. The Friends of the Maine Wildlife Park are a 501c3 organization that raise funds for the construction of new wildlife exhibits and park programs. If you are interested in volunteering at the park, please ask the gatehouse attendant for a volunteer application form.

1. MAIN ENTRY/PICNIC AREA

To your left, you will see a large green-roofed outdoor classroom and picnic shelter, which may be reserved for special events like birthday parties and family reunions. During May, June, Sept and Oct, wildlife and conservation education programs are regularly held here for dozens of schools and home school groups. To the right and beyond, the cathedral pines shade our large picnic area. This area makes an excellent spot to have your lunch or just a snack. Grills are available for no extra charge, but you need to bring your own charcoal and grilling items!

Right now the Snack Shack has a large variety of small concessions available, including drinks, candy, chips, ice cream, and much more.

2. VISITOR'S CENTER

The log cabin visitor center on your left houses restrooms and an interactive learning center about Maine wildlife. You'll have a hard time pulling the kids away from the games, puzzles and displays here. You might also enjoy the wildlife gardens to the rear of the building, which showcase attractive plantings that attract wildlife to backyards.

3. FISH HOUSE

As you walk along the paved pathway past the visitor center, look for the 6 foot long Maine brook trout sculpture in front of the Fish house, which features cold water and warm water fish tanks stocked with live native Maine fish. Some fish, particularly trout and salmon, must live in the cold, highly oxygenated waters of streams, brooks and deep clear lakes. Others, like bass and pickerel, survive quite well in shallow, warmer waters. See if you can identify the live fish in the tanks using the display posters. Maine is a top destination for anglers in pursuit of trophy fish. The MDFIW raises and stocks over 1.2 million cold water fish annually for enthusiastic anglers to catch in both open water and ice fishing seasons statewide.

4. SNACK SHACK

If you are ready for an ice cream, stop at the Friends of the Maine Wildlife Park Snack Shack. The Friends are a volunteer, 501C3 organization dedicated to raising funds for the wildlife here at the park. The Friends have contributed substantially to improvements on many wildlife exhibits in the park; as well as beautifying it for people by planting and maintaining many of the gardens you see throughout the property. Immediately after the Snack Shack you can't miss the sign for our small mammal trail. Take a left to see six different species on display and to tour the white-tail deer exhibit as well.

5. DEER TRAIL

White-tailed deer in Maine are found in greatest numbers in the southern and central portions of the state. Because of limiting factors like deeper snow, less food and more severe winters, less deer are able to survive in far northern and down east Maine. How many deer can you see in this 2.5 acre exhibit? Deer are extremely well camouflaged with a reddish brown coat in summer, and a rich brown one in winter. There are almost a dozen deer in here. Can you find the bucks or male deer - they grow a set of antlers each year. You will find more does, or female deer in the herd than bucks. The females do not grow antlers. The bucks shed their antlers each winter, and begin the process anew each spring. The Dept of fish and wildlife carefully manages the state's deer herd by regulating hunting seasons, protecting critical deer habitats and wintering areas, and working with large landowners to improve and protect quality deer environments.

You may also see some wild turkeys in this exhibit. These are actually wild birds that find the park a great place for food and shelter, and come and go as they please.

6. RACCOON EXHIBIT

Raccoons are a very common small furbearer, and are found throughout Maine. Notice the unusual albino raccoon. There is a sign describing the characteristics of true albinos here. These two 'coons' were illegally kept as pets. It is against the law for anyone to keep any wild animal as a pet in Maine. Since they are so used to people and associate humans with food, they cannot be released back into the wild, and so must remain here at the wildlife park. Did you know that raccoons are excellent swimmers and climbers? Clever and agile, they are highly adapted to gathering and

eating a great variety of foods. Contrary to popular belief, raccoons do not wash everything they eat, although they are often observed fishing with their paws for freshwater mussels and crayfish in brooks and ponds.

7. WOODCHUCK EXHIBIT

Woodchucks are another very common small mammal in Maine. Often seen in meadows, fields and along mowed roadsides, the woodchuck is fond of grasses, clover, alfalfa and unfortunately, people's vegetable gardens. Note the albino 'chuck'. These species are also 'melanistic'; or have several color variations, with a small population of black woodchucks living in the Falmouth area. Did you know that a woodchuck can dig a tunnel 5 feet long in one day? Their burrows often contain a network of tunnels, some up to 40 feet long. Also called the ground hog, they are 1 of only 3 true mammal 'hibernators' in Maine.

8. OPPOSSUM

Opossums have just recently arrived in Maine over the last 10 years. Prior to that, these prehistoric 'marsupials', or mammals with a pouch to hold their young, were found in warmer, more southern New England states. For some reason, 'possums' have decided to expand their range northward into Maine, risking literally freezing their hairless ears and tails off during our tough winters. Possums do not hibernate, but will put on layers and layers of fat during spring summer and fall; then den up in a snug spot to spend the winter. Opossums have 50 teeth, more than any other land mammal on this continent, and it uses its 'prehensile', or grasping, tail to hang from tree branches.

9. FISHER EXHIBIT

This fisher has quite an active personality, typical of this species. Known for their dangerously fierce and predatory natures, the fisher is one of the few animals that successfully hunts porcupines by striking the animal's face, then flipping it over to expose its unquilled belly. In Maine, fishers are frequently blamed for taking unsuspecting house cats; and have been documented to prey upon threatened Canada Lynx in the northwestern corner of the state. There is a short, legal trapping season for fisher, where interestingly, the female pelts are worth more than the males — \$42 vs \$28.

10. SKUNK EXHIBIT

There are 2 skunks in this exhibit, although they are often not easy to find. Skunks are more of a nocturnal animal, usually most active at night. The larger is the male, the smaller the female. The female skunk has had her scent gland removed since she was originally destined to be a pet. Since keeping wild animals is illegal in Maine, she has found a home here at the park. Similarly, the male skunk is also unable to spray, but for different, medical reasons. The skunk's famous defense, the ability to launch a foul-smelling spray up to 15 feet, deters most predators. However, great horned owls have no sense of smell, and are a major predator on skunks.

11. PORCUPINE EXHIBIT

Porcupines are found throughout Maine, and like the skunk, are armed with a very effective defense. Close to 30,000 quills cover the animal, but contrary to popular belief, they cannot be shot out of the animal. When confronted with an attacker, the 'porky' will swat at it with its tail, loaded with 4 inch needle sharp quills! If it connects, then hundreds of barbed quills are embedded into the attacker, quickly discouraging any further attempts. During winter, when food is scarce, many a young owl, fox, coyote or even eagle will risk an attack on a porcupine, only to wind up with a faceful or talonful of quills. For the next stop on the tour, continue back towards the Snack Shack and look for the tree trail on your left.

12. TREE AND GAME TRAILS

You are now at the trailhead for the Tree Trail and the Game Trail. Both trails will lead you to the moose exhibit.

The tree trail is stroller and wheelchair accessible. Learn how to identify common Maine trees, see how foresters measure trees using Biltmore sticks, skip across a corduroy road, and visit the tree measurement learning station.

The Game trail is further down the path on the left; and is **not** accessible to wheelchairs or strollers. See if you can find 13 life-size birds and mammals hiding along the way; and make sure you try to answer the questions posted on the trail. The brochures on either end of the trail have the answers for you if you are stumped.

13. TREE LEARNING STATION

How much wood is there in a cord? How is a sawlog sawed? What kinds of trees are used for lumber? These and other questions can be answered by a stop at this learning station. Take a minute to explore and learn about one of Maine's most important natural resources!

14. MOOSE YARD

The moose is the Maine state mammal, and one of the most popular wild animals here at the wildlife park. Look for the large male, or Bull Moose, who starts to grow a new set of antlers every spring. People often think that moose use their antlers primarily for defense and fighting. While they do use their antlers to challenge and fight other bulls both visually and physically during the rut, or breeding season, they primarily use their large, heavy feet for fending off potential attackers. This bull probably weighs about 850 lbs. In Maine, the largest moose can weigh well over 1000 lbs!

There is also a younger cow, or female moose within this 3 acre exhibit. The cows **do not** grow antlers.

Moose are very good swimmers, and can easily swim across a 7 mile lake. A moose can store close to 100 lbs of food in its stomach, and primarily eats the leaves, buds and twigs of woody trees and plants. Moose also love to eat aquatic plants, or those that grow on the bottoms of lakes, streams and ponds. There are probably over 25,000 moose living in Maine. The dept. of fish and wildlife keeps track of this population by regulating hunting seasons, enforcing laws protecting the animals,

protecting and enhancing the habitats, or places moose live; and by collecting important scientific information about and preventing the spread of moose diseases. Where can you see a moose in the wild? You need to get up early!! Moose are most active at dawn and dusk. Look for moose in and around freshwater lakes, ponds, and wetlands surrounded by spruce fir forests. At dusk, you really need to watch out for moose as they cross roads and interstates. Because of their dark color, and eyes that do not reflect in a car's headlights, they are extremely difficult to see at night when cars travel at higher speed limits. There are hundreds of car/moose collisions in Maine every year, and neither people, their vehicles, or the moose fare very well after a crash.

15. COYOTE EXHIBIT

Across the road from the moose are the coyotes. Look for a male and a female coyote here. The female has a much longer, more narrow face and nose; while the male has a darker colored 'saddle' marking on his back. Can you tell the difference between them? These animals are fed as natural a diet as possible. The park accepts a number of road-killed deer and moose for use as feed for our carnivorous, or meat eating wildlife. Coyotes are known for their loud and melodious 'singing', or howling and high-pitched yelping, especially at night. These adaptable predators are found throughout Maine, and in virtually every kind of habitat, from the deep woods, to agricultural lands, to the suburbs and even downtown Portland and Bangor! They will eat just about anything edible, and have learned to adapt to human habitats.

16. DUCK DISPLAY

The duck nest box display will give you information about the 3 kinds of Maine ducks which use cavities, or holes in trees, for nesting. The dept of fish and wildlife maintains over 1200 nest boxes statewide for hooded mergansers, wood ducks and golden eye ducks to use for protected nesting sites. The nest box program has helped these duck populations grow exponentially, and all 3 species can commonly be found in most of Maine's lakes, ponds, wetlands and beaver flowages. There is a regular waterfowl hunting season in the fall that extends into winter months for sea ducks. These nest boxes are also beneficial for, and used by tree swallows, owls, grackles, flying squirrels and other kinds of wildlife.

For your convenience, a restroom is located across from the duck box exhibit.

17. BEAR EXHIBIT

Maine is home to over 25,000 black bears, the most bears in any state east of the Mississippi! You will see 3 black bears here, two females and one very large male. Although the large male has a reddish color, he is actually a black bear with a 'cinnamon' variation in color. This color is far more commonly seen in western black bears, although a few are observed in Maine annually. The larger black female, or sow bear, is well over 30 years old and has been at the park since she was recovered by the Warden Service as an illegal pet living in a school bus! The smaller black sow and large male, or boar, were surplus animals from another facility. The male weighs well over 440 lbs! All of the bears frequently use their swimming pool during the hot summer months, and are fed as natural a diet as possible. Bears eat far more fruit

and vegetables than meat, but their healthy, balanced diet is supplemented with fish and game meats, dog food and some breads. PLEASE, only feed these bears food from the feed machine!

The dept of fish and wildlife closely manages and tracks our black bear population by regulating hunting seasons and maintaining an ongoing study of about 100 wild black bears statewide. These 'volunteer' black bears are wearing radio telemetry colors that send radio signals back to computers to generate information about how bears live, travel, reproduce, and even die. Every winter, bear biologists enter the dens of radio collar wearing females to determine if they had cubs. Bears only have a litter of cubs every 2 years, and then only if they went into their winter dens with enough fat to sustain them and new offspring. This reproductive information helps biologists determine if the state's bear population is going up, down or holding steady.

18. FOX EXHIBIT

The fox exhibit houses 2 red fox on the right and 1 gray fox on the left as viewed from the platform. There is one male and one female red fox here. The red female was found as a 'kit', and is completely blind. The red male was also found as a kit, suffering from neurological symptoms that make him very uncoordinated and unable to fend for himself in the wild. Both red foxes were cared for by a professional and licensed wildlife rehabilitator, and are now safely and permanently housed at the wildlife park. A red fox can leap up to 15 feet in a single bound, run up to 30 miles per hour for short distances, and is an excellent swimmer. Foxes are very adaptable to humans, and are often spotted around farms and suburban backyards. Red foxes often follow farm tractors as they are haying, to munch on the mice, grasshoppers and crickets that are turned up by the mowers. Foxes eat a wide variety of foods, and are quite fond of mice and rabbits, as well as grasshoppers, crickets, acorns, apples and corn, just to name a few of their favorites!

The gray fox is a female, and was found in the middle of a road as a young kit. Gray foxes are much less common than red in Maine, although they seem to be expanding their range north into central Maine. They are a separate species from the red fox. These attractive animals tend to be much more shy of humans, and are less frequently observed in the wild. One unique characteristic of the gray fox is that they are excellent tree climbers when in pursuit of prey or escaping from a predator! These foxes also eat a variety of food, including various rodents, insects, birds, eggs and even frogs. Gray foxes are found only in the south and south central parts of Maine.

19. LYNX & BOBCAT EXHIBITS

Please note that the park's bobcats have been temporarily housed in the enclosures across from the Snack Shack.

Bobcats are found only in North America, and are the most common wildcat in Maine. Named for its stubby bobbed tail, this medium sized cat can leap 7-10 feet in a single bound. Bobcats are great climbers, and use trees, snags and rock outcrops for resting, observation and protection. Although bobcats eat a variety of small mammals and birds, they are capable of taking down a deer when the opportunity arises. Harsh winters, with deep snow and cold temperatures are hard on bobcats, and they may use barns, garages and other man-made structures for shelter during those times.

Bobcats are found most often in central and southern Maine, from remote wilderness habitats to farms, parks and suburban areas

Notice the difference in size between the lynx and the bobcat. Lynx have longer legs and much larger paws that act like snowshoes to help them move through the deep snow of their northwestern Maine habitat. Lynx generally reside north of Moosehead Lake and west of Rt. 11; so if you see a wildcat in southern or central Maine, it could only be a bobcat. The preferred diet of lynx is snowshoe hare. One lynx can eat as many as 200 hares per yr! Lynx are found only in Maine, Montana, Minnesota, Washington State, Alaska, and Canada; and are nationally listed as threatened species. MDIFW wildlife biologists monitor lynx populations by maintaining radio telemetry collars on up to 70 adult lynx. This enables wildlife biologists to track lynx territories, monitor their reproduction – documenting 37 litters of kittens since the study began several years ago; and to find out how they survive or die. Through this continuing study, it was found that fishers are a major predator of Canada lynx – something we were not previously aware of; and that many lynx simply die of starvation during long harsh Maine winters. The 2 lynx you see here are male and female. Because they were born in captivity at another facility, they cannot be released into the wild.

20. MOUNTAIN LION EXHIBIT

Are there really mountain lions in Maine? That is quite a question, with hundreds of sightings reported to wildlife biologists in Maine annually. Unfortunately, there has not been any documented evidence that suggests wild mountain lions reside in the state. Mountain Lions are known by many names, including cougar, puma, catamount, and panther. Long considered to be a hazard to people and domestic animals, these cats were hunted relentlessly and were extirpated, or eliminated from Maine by the late 1800s. Other populations still remained in other states; so today, many feel that Maine has both the habitat and the food sources to again support a mountain lion population. If you see a large feline bounding across a road, make sure to look for the characteristic long tail and try to take a picture! The lion on the left is a male, and was born here at the wildlife park – without a tail. The lion on the right is a female, also born in captivity, and is on loan from another facility. She was confiscated by game wardens after being kept as an illegal pet. These cats and all the animals in the park; are fed as natural a diet as possible. The park receives many road-killed moose and deer that are subsequently fed to our carnivorous, or meat eating animals.

You might notice the construction to the left and behind this exhibit. With funding from the Friends of the Maine Wildlife Park, staff and volunteers are currently working on the construction of a new and much larger mountain lion exhibit.

Bear to the left of the new lynx exhibit here and proceed towards the staff buildings and down the hill to the left to the turtle, hatchery, bird exhibits, and more.

21. TED MORSE BUILDING

The large gambrel barn on your left is the park's wildlife feed preparation area, and is housing for some of the wildlife that is being rehabilitated or being kept under close supervision. During the summer, you might find fawn deer or moose calves in the pens

on the far side of the building that have been brought to the park to be cared for. Unfortunately, in many cases, these moose and deer youngsters have been unintentionally 'kidnapped' from their real parents. Wild animals cannot hire babysitters, and so must leave their young behind to find food. Mother deer and moose hide their young, but if a person finds one, they think the babies have been abandoned.

NOT TRUE!! If you or someone you know finds a young moose or deer, LEAVE IT ALONE. The mother will come back to feed and care for it just a few times a day. These youngsters would be so much better off with their real parents, but we will make every effort to release them next spring into a wild habitat that will be suitable for them.

22. TURTLE EXHIBIT

The native turtle exhibit is a great place to meet and photograph the 7 species of Maine turtles. On a sunny day, many are out basking on logs in the ponds; or they may be hiding in the corners around the waterfalls. There are well over 2 dozen turtles here, so your chances of seeing several are good. The ponds are small natural ecosystems, with frogs, insects, minnows and aquatic plants providing natural turtle foods. In addition, the turtles are fed a variety of fruit, vegetables, meat, fish and vitamins. Read the color signs surrounding the exhibit to learn more about each kind of turtle. One of the biggest threats facing all of Maine's turtles are roads. Roads criss-cross through the habitats in which turtles live, and since turtles must cross roads to get from one place to another, unfortunately, many turtles are hit and killed by cars. You can help turtles by getting them out of the road and moving them to the side they are heading for. Never take a wild turtle home with you because you think you have a perfect backyard pond for it. Turtles have very strong homing instincts, and chances are the turtle you think you are helping will spend the rest of the summer trying to get back to its original home!

Turtles are cold blooded reptiles, meaning that their body temperature is that of the surrounding air. As the day warms, turtles become more active. On cloudy, cool days, or in the morning and later in the afternoon, turtles start to slow down and to find a protected place to spend the night. Turtles do hibernate in winter, although on early spring days it isn't unusual to see painted turtles swimming around under the ice of local ponds and lakes!

Across from the turtle exhibit our large eagle enclosure houses two different eagle species. Don't forget to meet these beautiful birds up close when your tour returns up the hill from the hatchery.

23. WETLAND TRAILS

Before you head down the hill to the Dry Mills state fish hatchery, make a short detour into the wetlands and wildlife area. The nature trail here passes through natural wetlands and a pond, with a variety of nesting structures that can be placed in similar habitats to attract and benefit the wildlife that live in wetlands. There are also several life size animal replicas camouflaged along the trail. See how many you can find!! Finally, there are signs that identify many different native species of wetland trees and shrubs. Wetlands are the most productive of habitats, with abundant food,

water, shelter and space for dozens of wildlife species. About three-quarters of Maine's endangered species utilize wetland habitats. Wetlands are instrumental in helping to clean our freshwater supplies, which is essential for wildlife and for people to survive. Wetlands are protected by both state and federal laws.

To get to the Dry Mills fish hatchery, one of 8 fish hatcheries owned and operated by the MDIFW, pass through the gate and proceed down the hill.

24. FISH HATCHERY

The Dry Mills state fish hatchery is one of 8 owned and operated by MDIFW. This hatchery raises up to 100,000 brook trout annually, and supplies the other Maine [State](#) hatcheries with an additional 300,000 brook trout fry, or baby fish, each spring. The green walled buildings are called raceways, and hold brook trout of different ages and sizes. The raceways are covered to keep predators like mink, otters, herons and other fish eating wildlife out; and also function to keep the fish calm so they do not injure themselves banging into the cement walls. Different ages and sizes of fish are stocked in waters throughout Maine in the spring and fall – all for you to catch! About 11,000 1 ½ year old brook trout will be stocked into 65 - 70 area waters this fall. The round pond at the end of the raceway has netting over it to protect the fish from predators. Watch the water boil as the 4,000 trout in this round pond go for the pelleted feed from the feed dispensers!

The white building at the bottom of the hill is the actual hatchery. In November it will be filled with as many as 1.5 million fertilized brook trout eggs. These eggs will be carefully monitored 24 hours a day/7 days a week, until they begin to hatch in late December or early January. As the fry, or baby fish emerge from the eggs, they are intensively monitored by hatchery personnel for any signs of disease. After 3 to 4 weeks, the baby fish begin to eat and as the water warms in spring, they begin to grow quickly in their pristine environment. By April, they will be 1½" to 2" inches long, and will soon be ready for transfer to the outside raceways where they will continue to eat and grow all summer. By November, the first young 'brookies' will be ready to be stocked into ponds, streams lakes and rivers statewide, while many more will be held until the following spring and fall, eating and growing ever larger. To view the bird exhibits next, its time to walk back up the hill!

25. GROUND BIRDS

The large, net-covered structure in the middle of the bird exhibits houses the wild turkeys and other ground birds. Wild turkeys are quite common in Maine, yet by the late 1800s, had been completely eliminated from the state because of over-hunting and habitat loss. MDIFW wildlife biologists restored turkeys to Maine in the early 1980s, and today their populations extend statewide – a true wildlife restoration success story. You may see wild turkeys in other areas of the park, and they are really wild birds. They come to the park because of the abundant free food and relative protection of this area.

Other birds you may see in this exhibit include ring necked pheasants and peacocks. The wildlife park actually started out as a facility to raise thousands of ring necked pheasants, which were distributed and released around the state for hunting opportunities. This program was phased out in the 1980s, and the former 'game farm'

changed roles and evolved into becoming the conservation and wildlife education facility you see today.

Ring necked pheasants are still reared on a very small scale by local cooperators in southern and central Maine, and are then released for fall bird hunting opportunities.

Peacocks are not, and never have been, native to Maine. However, they are a tradition here at the park, a reminder of the past when they were kept here with the pheasants. Today, they are crowd pleasers and a colorful reminder of what the wildlife park used to be. Peacocks are perfectly suited to living in Maine. Natives of India, they are used to temperate climates like ours, and survive the winters very well here given the proper shelter and food.

26. EAGLE EXHIBIT

The first eagle on the left is a golden eagle, arguably the rarest bird in Maine. This state never had a large nesting population of 'goldens', but the last known nesting pair died in their mid 20s several years ago, reproductive victims of heavy metal, PCB, and other contaminants and pollutants. Golden eagles are much more common in the western states. This bird came from California, where she was unfortunately clipped by a wind turbine. She can still fly to some extent, and attempts were made to reintroduce her back to the wild; but enough of the tip of one wing was damaged so that she really cannot do the maneuvering required to be able to hunt to survive. She was transferred to the wildlife park from a rehabilitation facility in CA, and will now represent this state's extirpated population of golden eagles. She is a young bird, and has adjusted quite well to captivity. As she matures, the golden necklace of feathers around her neck will become more visible. She eats a variety of foods, from mice and rabbits, to some road killed deer or moose; and somewhat unusual for this species, she really likes fish!

The eagle on the right is a mature bald eagle with the characteristic white head and tail". This bird sustained a permanent wing injury when she was blown out of her nest in a severe storm and fell close to 70 feet to the ground. A portion of her wing had to be amputated; and she will never be able to be released back into the wild.

Bald eagles were long an endangered species in Maine, and throughout the country. The widespread use of the pesticide DDT in the 1960s was magnified in the food chain; as fish ate the tainted insects, and the eagles ate the fish. The buildup of DDT in eagle's bodies caused their eggs to have extremely thin shells. When the adult birds tried to incubate them, the eggs cracked and broke. Maine bald eagle populations were reduced to a low of less than 100 birds.

A major effort to restore these symbols of our country began in the mid 1970s. The MDIFW began a campaign to protect bald eagle habitats, particularly historic nesting areas. DDT use was banned. Uncontaminated eggs and chicks were 'borrowed' from Alaska and other west coast states and placed into our last eagle pairs' nests to be raised as foster chicks. As more and more uncontaminated birds lived long enough to begin to rear their own chicks, the population gradually increased. Today, there are more than 500 nesting pairs of bald eagles in Maine, and they are often seen flying over rivers, lakes and coastal areas statewide.

Eagles are long-lived birds, some living up to 25-30 years in the wild. They are quite loyal to their nest sites and to each other, but will take a new mate or use a new nest location within the course of their reproductive life time. Keep your eyes to the sky as

you walk around the wildlife park, since wild eagles are often spotted flying over on their way to and from the surrounding area lakes.

27. BARRED OWL EXHIBIT

Barred owls are quite common throughout Maine and New England. Their very recognizable calls, a 'who cooks for you, who cooks for you' chant; are often heard during the day as well as at night. Barreds live in low lying swamps and wetlands adjacent to open fields. They are cavity nesters, using holes in trees that have been initially excavated by pileated woodpeckers to raise their young. These owls will also readily use nest boxes if they are placed in the right kinds of habitats. Barred owls eat a variety of foods, from frogs, snakes and crayfish..... to mice, small birds and other small mammals. Both of these owls have permanent injuries sustained in collisions with vehicles.

28. GREAT HORNED OWL EXHIBIT

Great Horned owls are common and found throughout Maine and New England. A very large owl, its call is the characteristic hoo, hoo hoo, HOO, HOO, HOO. Maine's earliest nesting birds, great horneds start laying eggs in mid February, with both parents taking turns to incubate the eggs and keep the chicks warm when they hatch in mid March. Rabbits and rodents are staple foods, however these large predators will take small birds, skunks, snakes and even small shorebirds when it lives in coastal areas. The wildlife park has a wild nesting pair of great horned owls that have successfully raised chicks right here in our tall pines. Their loud hoots can be heard from the early evenings to well into the night here! They can be spotted in the mornings and evenings hunting for the abundant squirrels and chipmunks we have here.

29. BROAD WINGED HAWK EXHIBIT

Broad winged hawks are among the most common hawk species in Maine. They are known for their spectacular fall migrations; when they gather in the hundreds to fly south out of Maine, heading for warmer places to over winter. These hawks are often hit by cars as they hunt along mowed grassy road borders looking for small rodents, snakes and grasshoppers to eat. A woodland nester, broad wings raise their young in forests bordered by fields and open areas. This bird has a permanently injured wing.

30. RED-TAILED HAWK EXHIBIT

Watch for wild red tailed hawks as you drive the interstates of Maine. They are very commonly seen perched in trees and on telephone poles; or hunting along the grassy medians. Their preferred foods include mice, chipmunks and squirrels, small birds, insects and snakes. Red tails' flight patterns are also quite recognizable, with a distinctive flap flap glide, flap flap glide. Their loud, wild, screaming calls are often used in TV shows and movies as 'voice overs'. Because of their use of the open areas along roads, red tails are often hit by cars and sustain wing and head injuries. Both of these birds have permanent wing injuries, and have lived at the park for years. A male and female, each year they make a nesting attempt, laying eggs and tending them; however they have never hatched out any chicks.

31. ROUGH LEGGED HAWK EXHIBIT

Rough legged hawks are an uncommon raptor in Maine; generally only spending winters here. A characteristic behavior is to spot them hovering in the air over potential prey. They will eat mice and other small mammals, grouse, and rabbits or hares. This large, beautiful hawk resembles a small eagle. Unfortunately, it too has a permanently injured wing, so cannot be released back into the wild.

32. PEREGRINE FALCON EXHIBIT

Peregrine falcons are found worldwide and breed on all continents except Antarctica. Peregrines were completely eliminated from Maine and the entire east coast primarily due to contamination with DDT, a widely used pesticide that caused egg shell thinning and reproductive failure. DDT was banned from use in the US in 1972. Maine wildlife biologists joined other states in a large-scale reintroduction effort of these beautiful falcons, by releasing, or 'hacking' young peregrines obtained from captive breeding programs back into the wild. 144 birds were successfully released in this manner. Today, Maine has over 25 nesting pairs of peregrines that have established themselves from the wilds of Acadia and Baxter parks, to urban areas of downtown Portland and Bangor. Peregrines primarily eat other birds, so city environments provide an abundance of food in the form of pigeons and starlings. Peregrines attack and kill their prey in flight by a sharp blow from a vertical dive. Diving speeds have been estimated at up to 200 miles per hour!! Nests are simple scrapes on ledges, overhangs or cliffs. There is a so-called 'peregrine-cam' on the internet where a nesting falcon can be observed on a Portland city building ledge. Many Peregrines can be spotted passing through Maine on their fall migrations south from Greenland and Canada.

This peregrine was found with a wing injury in Florida last winter. He is permanently disabled, so came back north to Maine to work as both an educational and exhibit bird.

33. EASTERN SCREECH OWL EXHIBIT

Screech owls have just recently moved into Maine. These little owls have expanded their ranges north, and are now confirmed to be nesting in the southern portions of the state. Screech owls tend to use habitats of open deciduous forests, orchards, parks and forest edges adjacent to fields and wetlands. Their whistling, wavering, and descending calls are very loud and distinctive for such a small bird! They will eat small rodents and birds; large insects, reptiles, frogs, crayfish and even snails! Screeches are cavity nesters, and will use nest boxes placed in the correct types of habitats to lay eggs and raise their young. The most common coloration is a so-called gray phase; the 2 in this exhibit are the more usual red phase and brown phase. Unfortunately, both of these little owls have permanent injuries so cannot be released back into the wild.

34. SAW-WHET OWL EXHIBIT

There are 2 saw whet owls in this exhibit. They are only 6-8 inches tall, and often hide at the top of the trees and in the corners. These little owls are fully grown, and normally spend just the winters here in Maine. In the spring and thru the fall, they

migrate north to Canada to breed and raise their young. Both saw whet owls have been permanently injured after colliding with cars, a fate that often occurs to any species of owl as they hunt the mowed edges of roads. Although they are small, saw whets have all the same equipment as their larger relatives — sharp hooked beaks, sharp strong talons, large eyes for seeing well at night and feathers constructed to make for silent flight. They favor mice and small birds as major food sources.

As you proceed left to the blackbird exhibits, notice the huge old white oak tree on the corner. White oak gets its name from the light color of the bark, and occurs in Maine in southern to central areas. It likes sandy soils and gravelly ridges. The acorns ripen by September, and the Indians pounded them into a flour and bleached out the bitter tannins with hot water. The wood is strong, heavy, hard and durable, and is used for ship building, posts, poles, pilings, furniture and flooring. This tree is estimated to be over 250 years old.

35. TURKEY VULTURE EXHIBIT

Turkey vultures are a more recent addition to the Maine bird list, expanding their range north into the state over a decade ago. They are now found nesting as far north as Baxter state park. Turkey vultures are noted for soaring in large groups, with their wings set in a 'dihedral' pattern, or looking like TV antennas. They ride the warm lifts of air thermals as the day warms, looking for carrion, or dead animals to eat. Their heads are bare of feathers; making an easier clean up after a feast on or inside something that has been dead for a while. An essential part of nature's clean up crew, turkey vultures do a valuable service! Turkey vultures are very long lived, sometimes getting to be over 70 years old. They are one of just a few birds presumed to have a sense of smell, using that, and their excellent eyesight, to find their next meals.

36. RAVEN EXHIBIT

The common raven is found throughout the state, however tends to be more abundant the further north you travel. Much larger than the crow, ravens have a loud guttural croak. Ravens are omnivores, eating plants as well as small mammals, carrion, birds and insects. You can tell the difference between a crow and a raven in flight by the shape of each birds' tail. The crow has a straight, fan shaped tail; while the raven has a longer, wedge shaped tail. These birds are known for their aerial displays, with mock fighting, tumbling and other acrobatics. Ravens are very intelligent animals.

37. NATURE STORE

A stop at the nature store is a must! There are great gift items, park souvenirs, and a wonderful nature and wildlife book selection for children. All proceeds from the nature store are directed into the wildlife park fund, used to operate the park and to improve the wildlife exhibits and displays.

38. WARDEN'S MUSEUM

The Maine warden service museum has a number of exhibits and displays. The Maine Warden Service dates back to 1880, when the first wardens were appointed to enforce new laws giving Maine's moose and deer their first legal protection. Today, the Maine

Warden Service is a modern, professional, and highly effective law enforcement agency that works to protect inland fish and wildlife resources and the safety of the public. Game Wardens are certified law enforcement officers, who use state-of-the-art equipment, including four-wheel drive trucks, boats, snowmobiles, ATV's, personal computers, a two-way radio repeater network, portable radios, GPS, forensic mapping equipment, fixed wing aircraft, and night vision equipment, to carry out their responsibilities. In addition, the warden service maintains its own forensic laboratory, Dive team, K-9 unit, Firearms Team, Forensic Mapping Team, ERT Team, and aircraft division.

A Game Warden's work includes patrolling an assigned area called a district. Patrolling is usually done alone in areas where there is a concentration of hunting, fishing, and trapping activity. Wardens inspect licenses as well as fish and wildlife possessed by individuals, and explain fish and wildlife, recreation, and environmental laws, rules, and regulations. Patrols may be conducted on foot or by truck, boat, canoe, snowmobile, all-terrain vehicles or airplane.

39. AMPHITHEATER

This wildlife education amphitheater sees hundreds of children and adults throughout the season. Through July and August, the park offers a story hour here on Thursdays at 10:30. Young children and their parents have a wildlife themed children's book read to them, and then participate in an exciting craft time that relates to the story. On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays at 11:00 and 1:00 during the same two months, the amphitheater is also the stopping point for many of our wildlife talks that feature different species of Maine wildlife. These fun talks are appropriate for all ages and sometimes offer a glimpse of a live animal! Both story hours and wildlife talks are free programs that are included with general admission on the scheduled days. Reservations are not required.

40. WILDLIFE CARE LODGE

This staff-only building could be considered a "hibernation station", serving as winter quarters for some of our small mammals who are typically less active during Maine's cold winter months. If you missed the small mammal exhibits, proceed to the Snack Shack and take a right immediately before the umbrellas.